

OFFICE OF PREVENTION, EDUCATION, AND CONTROL

# *your* HEART *your* LIFE



A LAY HEALTH  
EDUCATOR'S  
MANUAL

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH  
NATIONAL HEART, LUNG, AND BLOOD INSTITUTE



# Be More Physically Active

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## Objectives

**By the end of this session, group members will learn that:**

- Physical activity is good for the heart and overall health.
- People should be physically active for a total of 30 minutes every day.
- Brisk walking is a simple activity almost everyone can do.
- There are ways to fit more activity into a busy schedule.

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## Materials and Supplies

**To conduct this session you will need:**

- *Your Heart, Your Life* manual and packet of picture cards
- Blackboard and chalk or several large pieces of paper, a marker, and tape
- Cool drinking water and cups
- (Optional) VCR and TV monitor
- (Optional) “La nueva maquina de la salud: Haga ejercicio” Telenovela or fotonovela in the guide *Más Vale Prevenir Que Lamentar* (pages 12 and 13)
- (Optional) Music for walking activity and tape or compact disk player

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## Handouts

**Give group members these handouts during this session:**

- Take Heart. Say Yes to Physical Activity, pages 37 and 38
- Stretching Exercises, page 39
- How To Exercise, page 40
- Make Physical Activity a Habit — My Personal Record, page 41
- Sample Walking Program, page 42

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## Session Outline

### Introducing the Session

1. Welcome
2. Review of Last Week's Session
3. About This Session

### Conducting the Session

1. Facts About Physical Activity
2. “La nueva maquina de la salud: Haga ejercicio” Telenovela or fotonovela in the guide *Más Vale Prevenir Que Lamentar* on pages 12 and 13 (optional)
3. Benefits of Physical Activity
4. Types of Physical Activity
5. Getting Started: Important Things To Know
6. Finding Time To Be Physically Active

## 7. Walking: An Activity for Almost Everyone

A. Discussion

B. Walking Activity

### **Weekly Pledge**

### **Review of Today's Key Points**

### **Closing**



**Note:** If you have time, include a 30-minute activity (like the walking activity in this session) at the beginning or at the end of each of the rest of the sessions.

# Introducing the Session

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## 1. Welcome

- **Welcome** the group members to the session.

## 2. Review of Last Week's Session

- **Ask:**

At the last session we talked about the risk factors for heart disease.  
Who remembers the risk factors that we can prevent or control?



**Note:** Allow about 3 minutes for their responses. Answers are:

- high blood pressure
- high blood cholesterol
- smoking
- diabetes
- overweight
- being inactive

## 3. About This Session

- **Say:**

Today's session discusses physical activity and how important it is to your heart health. When the session ends, you will know:

- How physical activity can help you and your family
- What kind of activities are good for you and for your heart
- How much activity you should do
- How you can find time to be active

# Conducting the Session

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## 1. Facts About Physical Activity

### ■ Say:

Not getting enough physical activity is a major health risk for people today.

- Being physically inactive puts you at risk for heart disease. The good news is that you can do something about this risk factor.
- Unfortunately, physical inactivity is rising among Latinos, especially Latino women and children.
- As a person gets older, having little or no physical activity can lead to health problems.

## 2. “La nueva maquina de la salud: Haga ejercicio”

*(optional)*

- **If you choose, show** the telenovela on physical activity, “La nueva maquina de la salud: Haga ejercicio,” or have volunteers read the story on pages 12 and 13 in the guide *Más Vale Prevenir Que Lamentar*.

## 3. Benefits of Physical Activity

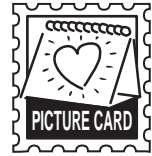
### ■ Ask:

How do you think physical activity can help you?



**Note:** Give the group about 5 minutes to answer. Write their answers on the blackboard or a large piece of paper taped to the wall.

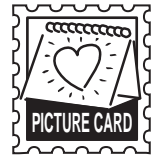
- **Show picture cards 2-1 and 2-2. Add any of these reasons if they are not said. Say: Physical activity can:**



- Strengthen your heart and lungs
- Give you more energy
- Help you feel better about yourself
- Help lower your blood pressure
- Lower your stress
- Help lower your blood cholesterol
- Help you sleep better
- Help lower your chance for diabetes

- **Show picture card 2-3. Say:**

People feel better when they are active. Physical activity may help you lose excess weight and control your appetite.



## 4. Types of Physical Activity

- **Ask:**

What do you do to be physically active?



**Note:** Give the group about 5 minutes to answer. Write their answers on the blackboard or a large piece of paper taped to the wall.

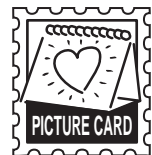
- **Say:**

There are different types of physical activity. Physical activity includes some of the things that you probably do each day, like walking, climbing stairs, or doing household chores.

- **Show picture card 2-4. Say:**

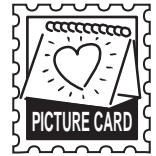
You may want to start with activities like these:

- Walking
- Vacuuming
- Climbing stairs
- Gardening
- Dancing
- Bowling
- Raking leaves



■ **Show picture card 2-5. Say:**

After a while, you will be able to do even more. Activities that you might enjoy include:



- Playing soccer, basketball, baseball
- Running or jogging
- Doing aerobics or floor exercises (calisthenics)
- Swimming
- Bicycling
- Jumping rope
- Skating

■ **Say:**

All types of physical activity help the heart. Start slowly. Then move on to higher level activities. For example, when you are comfortable walking, gradually begin to jog and you'll feel great!

■ **Say:**

You don't have to be an athlete to become fit. Just get moving! Find something you like to do and that you have time for.

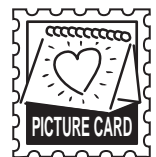
■ **Ask:**

How much physical activity do you think you need each day to improve your health?

*Answer:* Both children and adults should be physically active for at least 30 minutes or more every day.

■ **Show picture card 2-6. Say:**

If you can't set aside 30 minutes at one time to be active, you can break your activity into shorter periods of 10 minutes or more. Just make sure it adds up to at least 30 minutes each day.



■ **Say:**

Here's an example:

- Use your stationary bike for 10 minutes before you go to work..... 10
  - Take a 10-minute walk with your kids after work..... 10
  - Do aerobic exercises for 10 more minutes later in the day. .... +10
- 
- 30



## 5. Getting Started: Important Things To Know



**Note:** This session gives information for people who are just starting to be active. It also helps people add more activity to what they already do.

### ■ Say:

There are a few things that you should know before starting to be physically active:

1. Most people do not need to see a doctor before they start a slow, sensible program of physical activity. You should talk with your doctor if you:
  - Have heart trouble or have had a heart attack.
  - Take medicine for high blood pressure or a heart condition.
  - Are over 40 years old if you are a man, or over 50 if you are a woman, and you want to do a harder activity, like jogging.
  - Have more than one risk factor, like high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, diabetes, overweight, or smoking.
  - Have a family history of heart disease at an early age (before the age of 45 for men and 55 for women).
2. Start slowly. Build up the time and effort that you put into any activity. You should not be tired the next day.
3. Drink plenty of fluids before and after exercising, even if you are not thirsty. Drink water. Special sports drinks are not needed.
4. Wear comfortable clothing. Wear shoes and socks that give your feet support. You do not need to buy fancy outfits.
5. **Never** wrap your body in plastic or wear clothing that is too heavy. This will not help you lose fat, but it can:
  - Make you sweat too much
  - Make your body temperature rise
  - Make your heart beat too fast

- Make you sick to your stomach
- Cause you to pass out
- Cause damage to your organs

■ **Ask:**

Does anyone have any questions? Give the group 2 to 3 minutes to ask questions.

## 6. Finding Time To Be Physically Active

■ **Say:**

I know that all of you have busy lives. You may be wondering how you will ever find time to be active. Let's look at some ways.

- **Give each member a copy of the “Take Heart. Say Yes to Physical Activity” handout on pages 37 and 38. Let's see how to add movement to what you do every day. (Read the suggestions aloud.)**



- Take a walk
- Get off the bus one or two stops early and walk
- Use the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator
- Dance to your favorite music

■ **Ask:**

What are some other ways to become more active even when you don't have time?

**Note:** Give the group about 5 minutes to answer. Write their answers on the blackboard or a large piece of paper taped to the wall. Add these ways if group members do not say them.



- Take a 15- to 20-minute walk during your meal break at work or at the end of your work day.
- Jump rope a few minutes each day. Work up to jumping for 10 minutes.

## 7. Walking: An Activity for Almost Everyone

## A. Discussion



### Tips for Preparing for the Walking Activity

#### Before the start of this session:

**Review** the “Stretching Exercises” handout (page 39). Practice until you know each part well enough to teach them to the group members.

**Practice** a brisk walk. Take long strides and swing your arms.



#### When leading this activity, remember:

Music can get people in the mood for being active. Use a lively song for the warm-up exercises, a faster beat for the walking, and a relaxing song for the cool-down period.

Be enthusiastic. Group members will pick up on your enthusiasm and feel good about exercising.

Lead the walk in a circle if you have to do the walking indoors or if space is limited.

It is important to have plenty of cool drinking water available before and after the activity.

#### ■ Say:

Brisk walking is an excellent form of physical activity. It's easy to do, and you do not need special equipment. All you need are shoes for support and socks for cushioning.

#### ■ Say:

Walking can be done outdoors or indoors. If you do not feel safe walking in your neighborhood, a school or church yard may be a safer place to walk. Many shopping malls let people walk inside the mall before the stores open. Some malls even have walking clubs that meet every day.

#### ■ Say:

It's important to spend time warming up and cooling down each time you exercise. Although the risk of injury from walking is low, the warm-up gets

your leg muscles ready for the activity. The cool-down lets your heartbeat slowly return to normal. This keeps your leg muscles from getting stiff.

## **B. Walking Activity**

- **Ask the group members** to stand up and spread out, leaving at least 3 feet between them and the next group member.
- Turn on the music.
- **Say:**  
First, I am going to show you some stretching exercises. Watch me and then try doing them yourselves. Some are easier to do than others. With time and practice, you will be able to do them all. If you have a bit of trouble at first, just do your best. You will get a handout that tells you how to do these stretching exercises. Use the handout to help you do them at home.
- After the stretching exercises, **lead the group members** on a 15- to 20-minute walk. Walk slowly for the first 5 minutes. Then show them how to do a brisk walk for 5-10 minutes.
- During the last 5 minutes, slow your pace.
- **Say:**  
We are slowing down now so that our bodies can gradually relax. This is called the cool-down period. It is an important part. It's usually recommended that you gradually slow your pace during the last 5 minutes of an activity. Doing a few stretching exercises to loosen the muscles should also be a part of your cool-down.
- **Say:**  
For instance, runners or joggers may cool down by walking for a few minutes and then stretching their leg muscles before they stop entirely.
- **Ask:**  
How do you feel? Do you think you could continue to walk like this? Why or why not?

**Note:** Give the group about 3 to 5 minutes to answer.

**Say:**

If you already walk three or more times a week, add other activities to become more fit. Try running, jumping rope, or doing aerobics.

**■ Tell the group:**

One of the hardest parts of being more active is staying motivated. Many people find that having a partner helps them stay active because:

- You motivate each other. You can set goals together and help each other meet them.
- It makes the time go by faster. You will focus on talking rather than on the activity.
- A partner can be a family member, neighbor, or friend.

**■ Ask:**

What are other ways to help you stay motivated to continue being physically active?

Where are some safe places in your neighborhood to be active?

**Note:** Give the group about 3 minutes to answer. Write their answers on the blackboard or on a large piece of paper taped to the wall.



**Give each group member** a copy of the handouts “Stretching Exercises,” “How to Exercise,” the “Make Physical Activity a Habit — My Personal Record,” and the “Sample Walking Program” (see pages 39-42).

**■ Say:**

Use the “Make Physical Activity a Habit — My Personal Record” handout to track your daily progress.



## Weekly Pledge

■ **Say:**

Pledge one thing you will do to be more active during the coming week. Start by sharing your own pledge. You can write your pledges on the “Take Heart: Say Yes to Physical Activity” handout.



**Note:** Make sure each member gives details about what he or she plans to do. For example, instead of saying “I am going to walk,” have them say “I am going to walk three times a week for 30 minutes.”



## Review of Today's Key Points

■ **Say:**

Let's review what we have learned today.

■ **Ask:**

Q: What are some of the benefits of regular physical activity?

- A:
- Strengthen your heart and lungs
  - Help you lose excess weight and control your appetite
  - Lower blood cholesterol and blood pressure
  - Help you sleep better, reduces stress, increases energy
  - Lower your chance for diabetes

Q: What is an activity that just about everyone can do?

A: Brisk walking.

Q: What are simple ways to become more active throughout the day?

- A:
- Get off the bus early and walk
  - Park further away and walk
  - Use stairs instead of the elevator or escalator
  - Dance to your favorite music

Q: What is the minimum amount of activity recommended for you to do every day?

A: A total of 30 minutes

## Closing

### ■ Say:

Thank you for coming today. What did you think of today's session? I am looking forward to seeing you at the next session. The next session will be about how to cut back on salt and sodium to prevent high blood pressure.

**Note:** Think about today's class. What worked and didn't work? Have you made any changes in your own life that were covered in today's session?



# Take Heart. Say Yes to Physical Activity.

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Regular physical activity can help your heart and lungs work better, lower your blood pressure and blood cholesterol, lower your blood sugar, and help you control your appetite and weight. What's more, it can help you relax

and feel less tense and sleep better,

as well as feel more energetic and good about yourself.



**Make staying active a lifelong habit.**

**Doña Fela has learned that the more physical activity you do, the easier it gets.**

I do not wait until the end of the day. I am active throughout the day. I take the stairs instead of the elevators and walk everywhere I can. Now I am up to walking 30 minutes a day with Leticia, my neighbor. It helps to like what you do and to do it with someone else. We are so busy talking we walk even longer.





## Keep moving. Start slowly and work your way up!

Strive to do 30 minutes of activity every day. If you're short on time, try three 10-minute periods.

### A good place to start



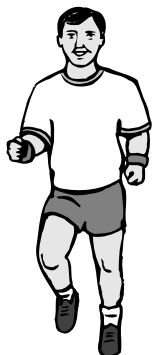
- Use the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Get off the bus one or two stops early and walk.

### Move to these activities

- Walk
- Rake leaves
- Dance
- Jump rope
- Garden
- Ride a stationary bike



### Increase to this higher level



- Run
- Do aerobics
- Swim
- Do floor exercises or jumping jacks
- Play soccer
- Bicycle

## Other things to do to help you and your family get started:

- Leave a pair of walking shoes in your car.
- Set a date and time with a coworker to begin walking.



Carmencita, Virginia, and Néstor have all increased their physical activity. They now dance and use their exercise machine almost every day. And Mariano also jogs in place each day.

## Make your personal pledge to exercise like the Ramírez family does!

### Look at these examples:

#### Morning

Park the car a few blocks away and walk for 10 minutes.

#### Noon

During lunch, walk with a friend for 10 minutes.

#### Evening

After dinner, ride a stationary bike for 10 minutes while watching television.

## Write the changes you will try to make this week:

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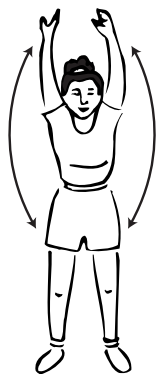
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**Your health and your family's health is priceless.  
Make an investment in it!**

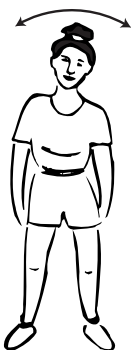
# Stretching Exercises

**Do these stretches gently and slowly. Do not bounce.**



## 1. Deep breathing

Arms up, breathe in, arms down, breathe out. Two times each.



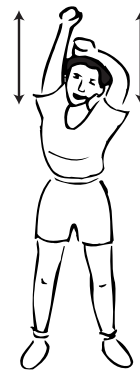
## 2. Neck Stretching

Side to side, front to back. Two times in each direction.



## 3. Shoulder Stretches

Up and down five times on each side.



## 4. Side Stretches

Up and down five times in each direction.



## 5. Waist Stretches

Side to side three times in each direction.



## 6. Twists

Side to side three times in each direction.



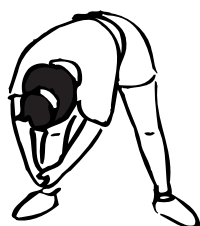
## 7. Back and Leg Stretches

Down and up five times.



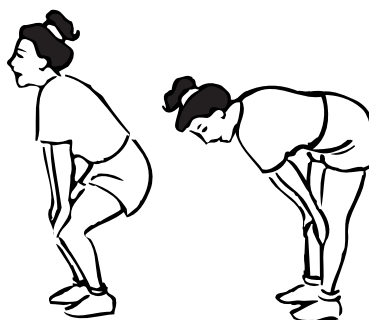
## 8. Back Stretch

Arms through legs six times.



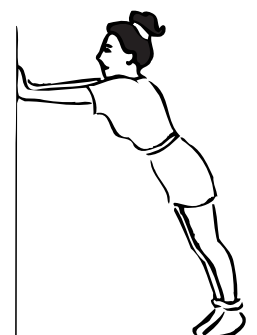
## 9. Leg Stretch (1)

Hold on to ankle, four times on each side.



## 10. Leg Stretch (2)

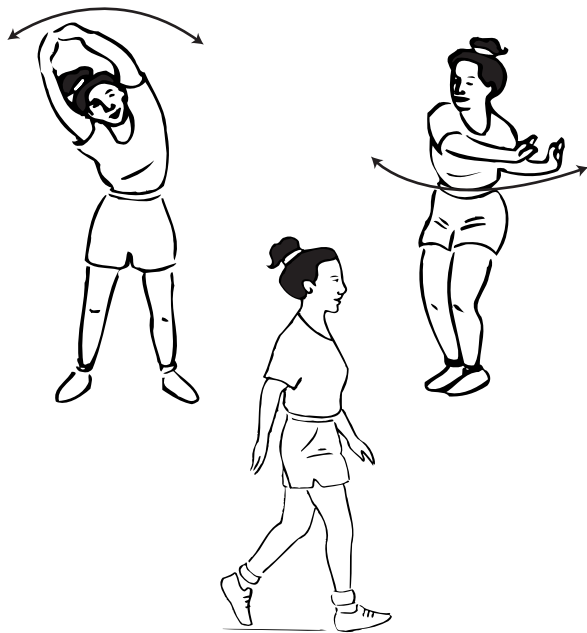
Down and up five times.



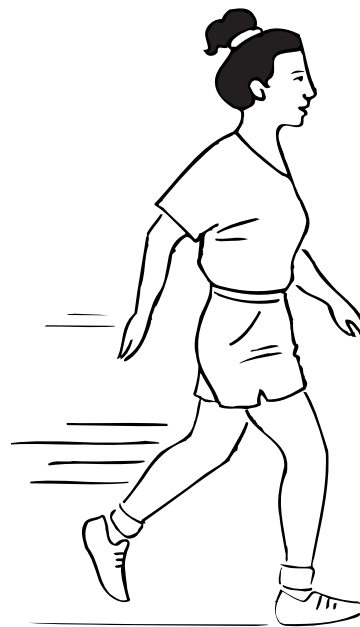
## 11. Leg Stretch (3)

Move heels up and down six times.

# How To Exercise



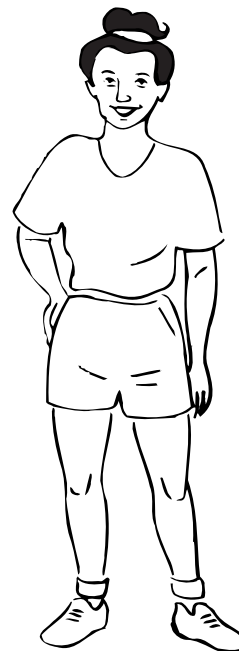
1. Do stretching exercises. (See handout on stretching exercises.) Then walk slowly for 5 minutes.



2. Walk briskly for 20 minutes.



3. Walk slowly for 5 minutes.



4. Relax!

# Make Physical Activity a Habit

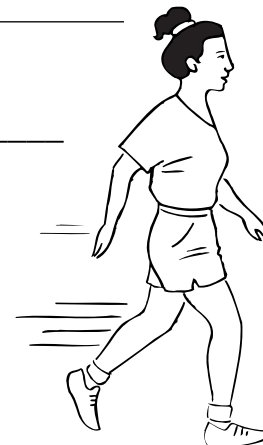
## My Personal Record



Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Track your progress every day.  
Start out slowly.**




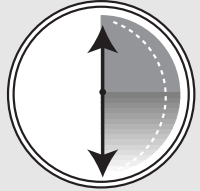
**Aim to reach 30 minutes or more a day!**



**Write in the log the number of minutes you are active each day:**

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Example Week 1</b>	5 min	5	10	10	15	15	15
<b>Week 1</b>							
<b>Week 2</b>							
<b>Week 3</b>							
<b>Week 4</b>							
<b>Week 5</b>							
<b>Week 6</b>							
<b>Week 7</b>							
<b>Week 8</b>							

# Sample Walking Program

	 <b>Warm Up</b>	 <b>Walk</b>	 <b>Cool Down</b>	 <b>Total Time</b>
<b>Week 1*</b>	Walk slowly 5 minutes	Walk briskly 5 minutes	Walk slowly 5 minutes	15 minutes
<b>Week 2*</b>	Walk slowly 5 minutes	Walk briskly 7 minutes	Walk slowly 5 minutes	17 minutes
<b>Week 3*</b>	Walk slowly 5 minutes	Walk briskly 9 minutes	Walk slowly 5 minutes	19 minutes
<b>Week 4*</b>	Walk slowly 5 minutes	Walk briskly 11 minutes	Walk slowly 5 minutes	21 minutes
<b>Week 5*</b>	Walk slowly 5 minutes	Walk briskly 13 minutes	Walk slowly 5 minutes	23 minutes
<b>Week 6*</b>	Walk slowly 5 minutes	Walk briskly 15 minutes	Walk slowly 5 minutes	25 minutes
<b>Week 7*</b>	Walk slowly 5 minutes	Walk briskly 18 minutes	Walk slowly 5 minutes	28 minutes
<b>Week 8*</b>	Walk slowly 5 minutes	Walk briskly 20 minutes	Walk slowly 5 minutes	30 minutes

\*Do every day of the week